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ABSTRACT

This workbook is part of "Contact Canada," a course for teaching English as a second language to adult Francophones. The specific aim of this booklet is to teach the meaningful use of the progressive present tense through comparison and contrast with simple present tense usage. The workbook, which is accompanied by a six-minute animated film and a set of cards, is divided into three sections. Section One is graded and illustrated to bring out the fundamental concept of "genericness" in the simple present. It is shown in a statement of general truth, as paraphrase for noun and adjective structures, and in conjunction with generic-time adverbs. Section Two focuses on the concept of "specificity" inherent in the progressive present, as opposed to the generalizing function of the simple present. Lessons are based on the semantic features of the tenses, namely unity, incompleteness, specificity and temporariness. These concepts are demonstrated by clear and simple explanations, illustrations and exercises. Section Three tests and reinforces student comprehension. (Author/AMH)

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WHAT DO YOU ARE DOING DO ?

The Simple Present and Progressive Present Tense

by Margaret Close Sacco

FL009458

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INTRODUCTION

This booklet has been designed to be used after the classroom presentation of the film, *What Do You Do? /What Are You Doing?*, which is available through the National Film Board of Canada.

The aim of the film and booklet is to teach the meaningful use of the Progressive Present tense. The Simple Present tense should already have been adequately taught and practised before this program.

The main teaching method is one of contrast. Colours, action, and sound are contrasted in the film to demonstrate and emphasize the differences in the meanings of the two tenses. In the booklet, graphic style is employed in a similar manner.

The greatest emphasis has been placed on the generalizing function of the Simple Present on one hand, and the specifying function of the Progressive Present on the other: *"Mary wears clothes"* vs *"Mary's wearing a long blue dress with bright orange flowers on it"*. This generality vs specificity is extended to its conversational implications and the student is shown the types of responses appropriate to the Simple and the Progressive tenses: *"I write books."* ⟶ *"What kind of books do you write?"* vs *"I'm writing a book."* ⟶ *"When do you expect to finish it?"*

The use of the Progressive Present tense in conjunction with the time adverb "now" is introduced late in the booklet and is treated as an important, but subordinate, semantic area of this tense. The reason for this break with teaching tradition is twofold. First, the "now" structure only represents a limited area of this tense's usage. It does not explain sentences such as, *"I'm writing a book"*, *"They're getting a divorce"*, and thousands of others. Secondly, this usage does not help in the explanation of the other uses of this tense. Rather, it seems to make the explanation more difficult. Whereas the logical combination of the ideas "specific" + "incomplete" + "present time" leads naturally to the use of this tense with the adverb "now".

In this booklet there is a variety of exercises, but all are primarily designed to reinforce and check meaning. This whole program has been designed to foster and facilitate *comprehension*. But once the student understands, (s)he will still require a certain amount of practice with the purely mechanical manipulation of the oral structures. Therefore, the teacher is encouraged to give numerous drills involving the Progressive Present tense after completion of this booklet.

WHAT DO YOU DO?

THE SIMPLE PRESENT

The Simple Present is used to make **general**, factual statements: e.g. Cows eat grass.
These statements have **present** validity: (NOT – *Dinosaurs roam the earth.)

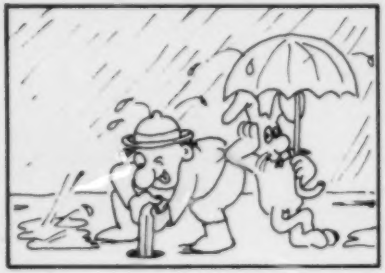
EXERCISE I

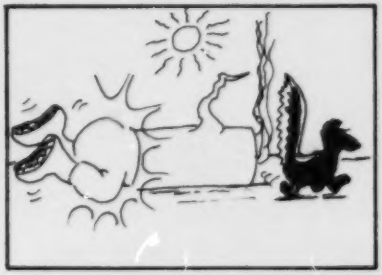
Use *action* verbs to make general statements about the following subjects.

Example: Kangaroos jump

1. Fish _____
2. Horses don't _____
3. Flowers _____
4. Children _____
5. Animals don't _____
6. The sun _____
7. People _____
8. In autumn, leaves _____
9. Money doesn't _____
10. Barbers _____
11. Doctors _____
12. The Prime Minister _____
13. Secretaries _____
14. Accountants don't _____
15. Hunters _____

Joe Brown is a hunter.





He hunts animals.

hunts ⟶ The times, or occasions, are **not specified** by this tense.
It could refer to winter or summer, night or day, . . .
animals ⟶ These could be bears, moose, rabbits, skunks, 'you name it'.

II

A fact about a person appears in brackets. Restate this fact in a new sentence using the Simple Present tense.

Example: (Mary is a folk singer.) She sings folk songs.

1. (Paul is a poet.) _____
2. (My brother's a smart dresser.) _____
3. (He's our Science teacher.) _____

4. (My boss is a non-smoker.) _____

5. (Jack's a good dancer.) _____

6. (Maureen's a gambler.) _____

7. (My husband's a great storyteller.) _____

8. (Brian's a stamp collector.) _____

9. (My cousins are vegetarians.) _____

10. (Irving's a fast reader.) _____

III (For Advanced Students)

Give a sentence that clarifies the one given and follows naturally from it. Use a verb that expresses an *action.*

Example: Jane's honest. She tells the truth.

1. Joe's quite lazy. _____

2. My boss is very frank. _____

3. Millie's intelligent. _____

4. They're industrious. _____

5. My father's generous. _____

6. Don's friendly. _____

7. He's conceited. _____

8. Bob's really shy. _____

9. Mike's considerate. _____

10. He's very nervous. _____

IV

Complete the following sentences. Use *action* verbs.

Example: I don't like doors that squeak. _____

1. I don't like clocks _____

2. I don't like children _____

3. I don't like shoes _____

4. I don't like bosses _____

5. I don't like movies _____

6. I like girls _____

7. I like doors _____

8. I like stories _____

9. I like flowers _____

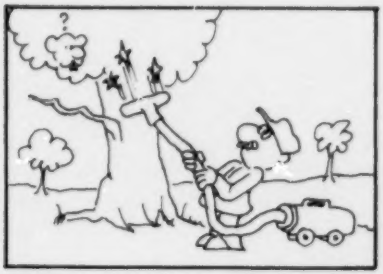
10. I like cars _____

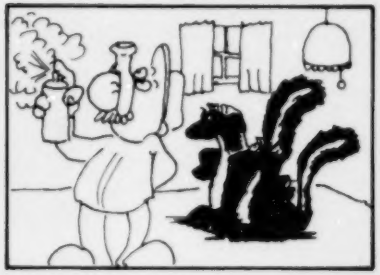
WHAT DO YOU DO?

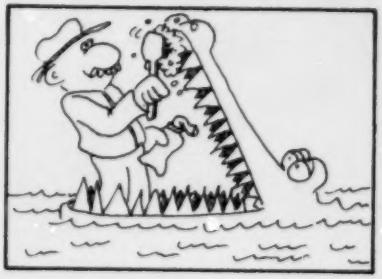
The question, "What do you do? ", normally refers to what *work* you do. In our society, a person's work is often considered the most important fact about him or her.

He's the Park Maintenance man.

He cleans up the park.







V

Write a sentence telling what these people do.

Example: He's the janitor. He takes care of the school.

1. Jane's a secretary. _____
2. Jim Murray is a tailor. _____
3. Helen is a housewife. _____
4. Pete Blackley is a marriage counsellor. _____
5. My brother's an architect. _____

6. Mr. Howe is a musician. _____

7. Ed Tanner's a journalist. _____

8. Mr. Carter's a real estate agent. _____

9. John Moss is a jockey. _____

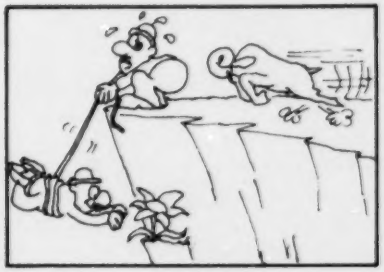
10. Jack's a salesman. _____

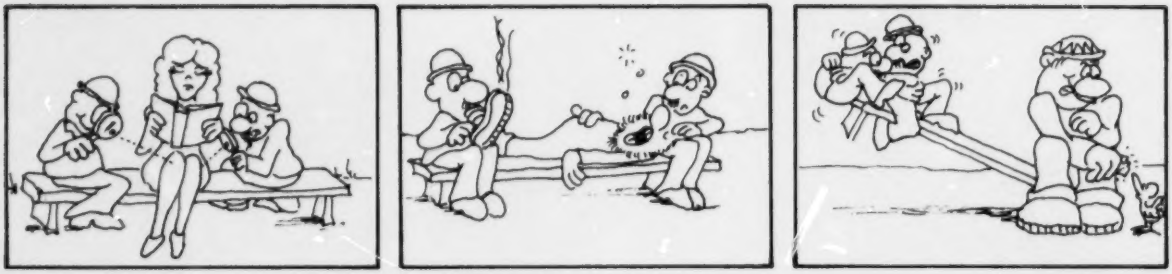
Sometimes

The Simple Present is used when there is an adverb, or adverb phrase, that indicates the *frequency* of an action.

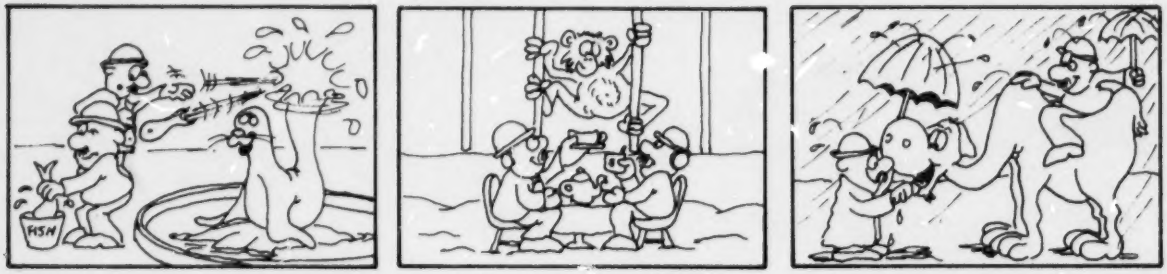
They *often* come to the zoo.
They *never* come on Sundays.
They *always* come together.
They come to the zoo *every Friday*.

SOMETIMES
They pick flowers.





They sit on the benches.



They feed the animals.

VI

One student asks the question. Another student answers in a complete sentence, indicating the frequency with which (s)he performs the action. Tell the truth!

Here are some adverbs you could use.

always
never
rarely
seldom
often
frequently
sometimes
every Monday
every night

1. Do you walk to school?
2. Do you go to the show often?
3. Do you eat in the cafeteria?
4. Do you read English newspapers?
5. Do you ever go dancing?
6. Do you watch TV?
7. Do you ever make long distance phone calls?
8. How often do you visit your friends?
9. How often do you go to the hairdresser's (or barber's)?
10. How often do you play cards?

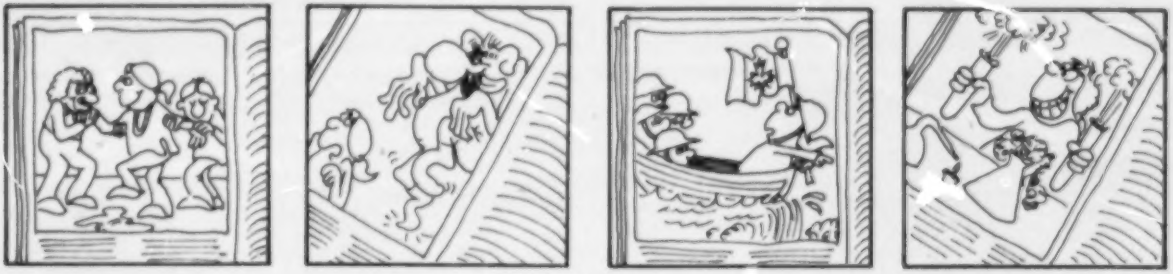
Now make up your own questions.

Generally Speaking

What do you do, young lady?
I'm a writer.
How interesting! What do you write?
Books. I write books.
What kind of books?
All kinds. I write romance books. I write mystery books. I write history books. I write science books.

Notice the types of general remarks that frequently cluster around the Simple Present.

"books" ⟶ in general; not one special book
"What kind"? ⟶ not "Which one? "
"all kinds" ⟶ a general answer



She writes books.

VII.

Make short dialogues using the Simple Present. Use the following questions to start.

Example: *What do you drink with your meals?*
Sometimes I drink tea, sometimes, coffee.
Don't you ever drink wine?
When I can afford it.

1. What do you wear to work?
2. Do you read much?
3. What do you usually do at night?
4. Do you take a lot of pictures?
5. Do you go to hockey games?

WHAT ARE YOU DOING?

THE PROGRESSIVE PRESENT

Formation of the Progressive Present

SUBJECT + BE + VERB+ING

Affirmative & Negative

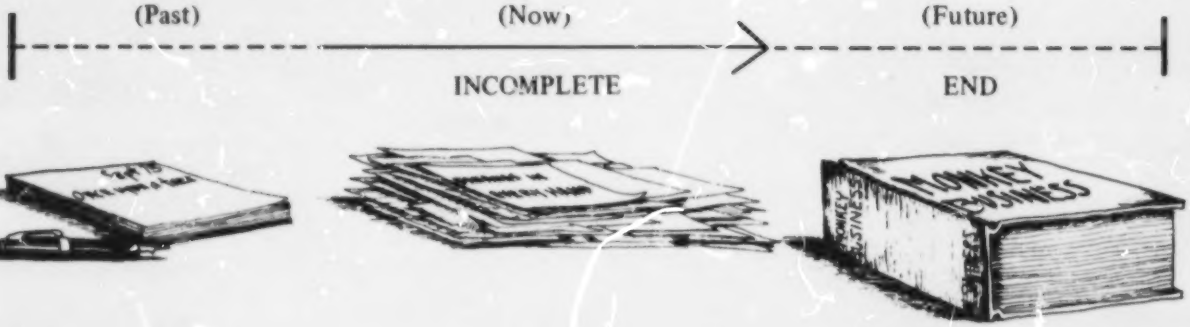
Subject	Be	Verb+ing
He She It	's isn't	doing
You They We	're aren't	
I	'm 'm not	

Interrogative

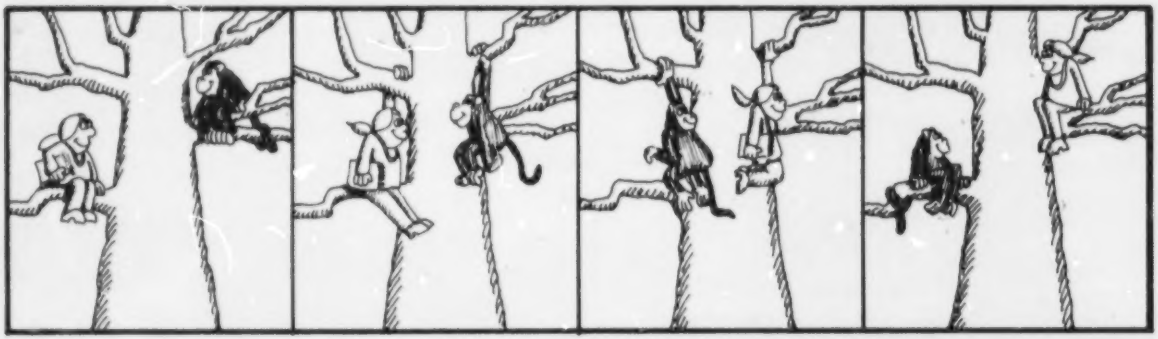
Be	Subject	Verb+ing
Is Isn't	he she it	doing
Are Aren't	you they we	
Am Aren't	I	

Using the Progressive Present

The Progressive Present is used to indicate an action, or event, that is **incomplete**, but that is expected to end some time in the future.



Nancy Smithers is writing a book.



Note: After Progressive Present sentences, questions about the expected termination, or completion, of the event are normal.

Example: When will Nancy finish writing the book?

BUT, after many Simple Present statements, a similar question would be inappropriate.

Example: Nancy writes books.

(Don't ask * When will she finish writing books?)

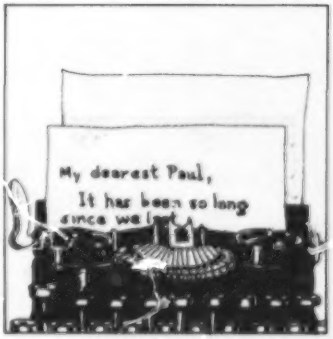
VIII

Look at the pictures carefully. Then answer the questions in complete sentences.

Example:
She writes.

What is she writing?

She's writing a letter to a dear friend whose name is Paul.

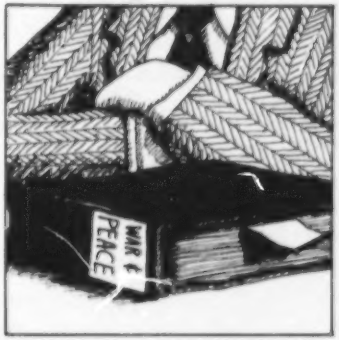


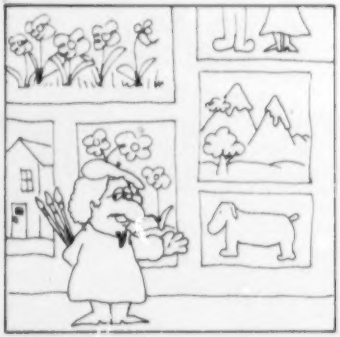
1. He reads a lot.

What is he reading?

_____

_____



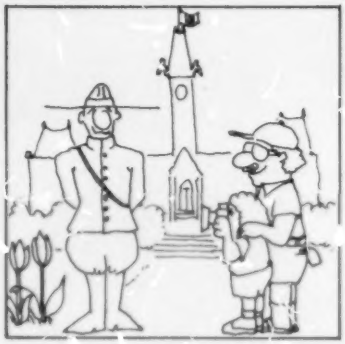


2. He's an artist. He paints.

What is he painting?

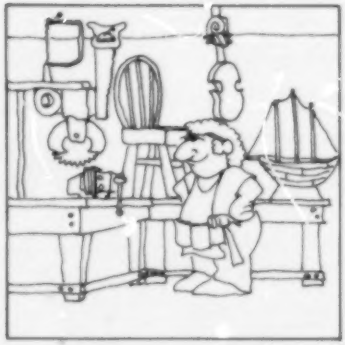
_____

_____



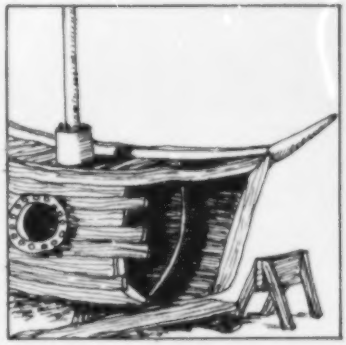
3. They're in Ottawa.

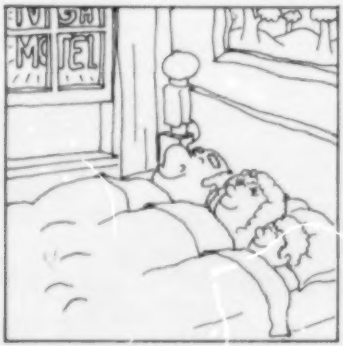
Where are they staying?



4. He makes things.

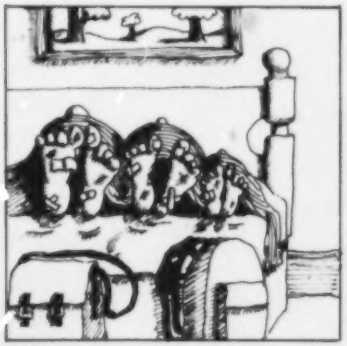
What is he making?





5. They're on a trip.

How are they travelling?



MINI-DIALOGUE

We're redecorating our house.

How nice! How long do you think it will take?

We hope to finish it by Christmas.

This Christmas, or next?

IX

Make dialogues similar to the one above. Use these sentences to start.

1. My husband's painting the kitchen.
2. I'm working towards my Bachelor's degree.
3. They're putting together a report on the cost of child care.
4. We're putting in a pool.
5. My daughter's making a skirt for her sewing class.

Processes

Gradual changes, that have already begun but are not yet completed, are expressed in the Progressive Present tense.

Example:

The tulip's wilting.

X

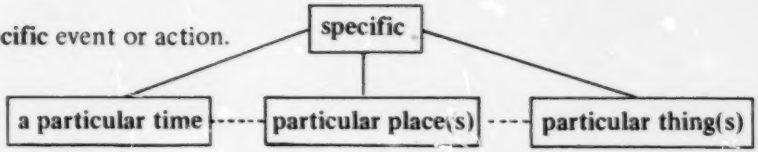
Take the following words, add the grammar (no adverbs), make meaningful sentences. (The changes expressed in these sentences have all begun but are not yet completed.)

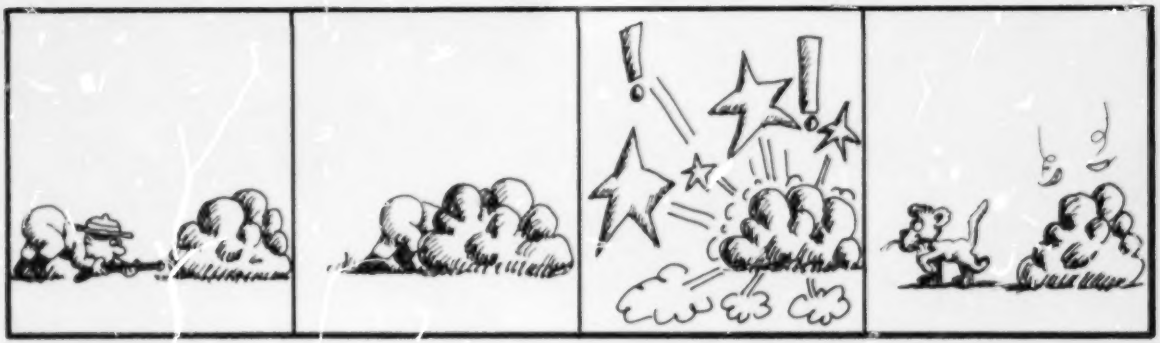
Example: She + not + get + fat She isn't getting fat.

1. husband + go bald _____
2. you + lose + weight _____
3. her children + grow up _____
4. the old man + go deaf +? _____
5. my hair + turn gray _____
6. she + become + a better actress _____
7. we + get + older _____
8. John + fall in love + with her +? _____
9. rivers + become + badly polluted _____
10. his health + not + improve +? _____

Specific

The Progressive Present signals a **specific** event or action.





He's hunting a lion.

Note: When? ⟶ Now.
Where? ⟶ In the zoo.
Which lion? ⟶ The one that left the tracks he's following.

Compare this to "He hunts animals." See page 4.

She eats eggs.

She's eating eggs.

Notice the differences in meanings in these 2 sentences, (especially in the word "eggs").

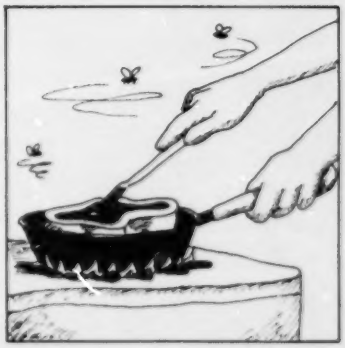
XI Look at the pairs of pictures. Answer the questions, giving as many details as possible.

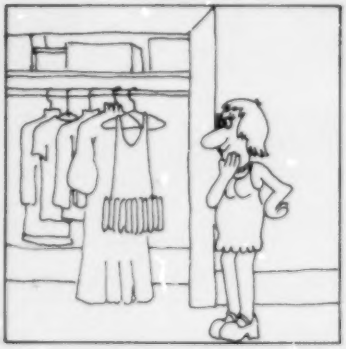
Example:

He cooks.

What's he cooking?

He's cooking a thick, juicy steak that he bought two months ago.





1. Mary wears clothes.

What's she wearing?

_____

_____

2. They eat a lot of fruit.

What are they eating?

_____

_____

3. He buys presents for his wife.

What's he buying for his wife?

_____

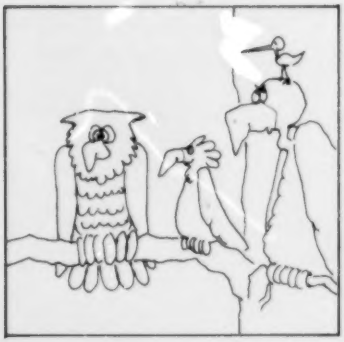
_____

4. They watch TV.

What are they watching?

_____

_____



5. Birds fly.

Which bird is flying?

_____

_____

6. He smokes.

What's he smoking?

_____

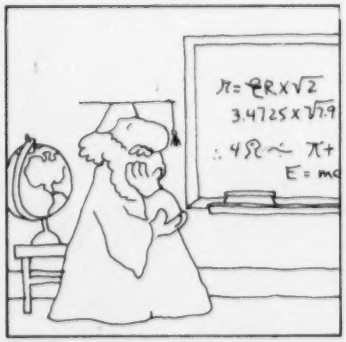
_____

7. Giraffes eat leaves.

Which giraffe is eating the leaves?

_____

_____

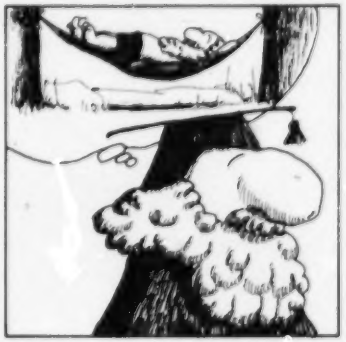


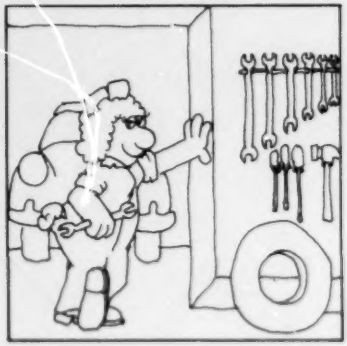
8. Men think.

What's this man thinking about?

_____

_____





9. She fixes things.

What's she fixing?

_____

_____

10. They play the piano.

Who's playing the piano?

_____

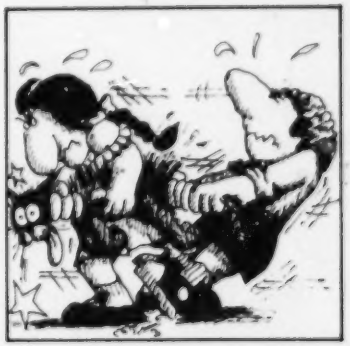
_____

11. They fight a lot.

What are they fighting over?

_____

_____

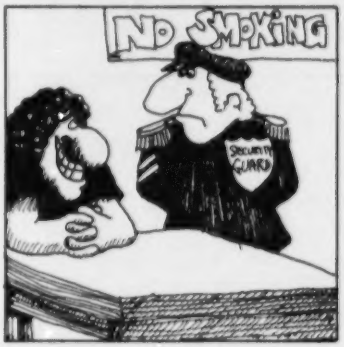


Now

The Progressive Present is used to express an **action** that is going on **now** (at the moment of speaking).

John smokes. → Now he's smoking.

John smokes. → Now he isn't smoking.



XII

Look at the pictures. Answer the questions.

Example:

The wind blows.

Is the wind blowing?

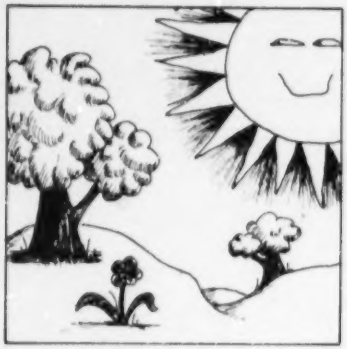
Yes, it certainly is!

1. Bob reads the newspaper.
   Is Bob reading the newspaper?

   _____

2. Mary jogs.
   Is Mary jogging?

   _____



3. It rains.
   Is it raining?

   _____

4. Their baby sleeps a lot.
   Is their baby sleeping?

   _____

5. She drinks coffee.
   Is she drinking coffee?

   _____

6. He works hard.
   Is he working hard?

   _____

7. She swims.
   Is she swimming?

   _____

8. His wife washes the dishes.
   Is his wife washing the dishes?

   _____

9. They dance.
   Are they dancing?

   _____

10. Frogs jump.
    Are these frogs jumping?

    _____

Classroom Quiz

Part A

The teacher asks individual students the following pairs of questions.
The students give short, *true* answers.

1. Do you smoke?
   Are you smoking?

2. Do you drink water?
   Are you drinking water?

3. Do you drive?
   Are you driving?

4. Do you eat?
   Are you eating?

5. Do you swim?
   Are you swimming?

6. Do you speak English?
   Are you speaking English?

7. Do you brush your teeth?
   Are you brushing your teeth?

8. Do you play cards?
   Are you playing cards?

9. Do you listen to the radio?
   Are you listening to the radio?

10. Do you cook?
    Are you cooking?

Part B
Now the students give long, complete answers.

1. What languages do you speak?
   Which language are you speaking now?

2. What types of clothes do you wear?
   What are you wearing now?

3. Do you think?
   What are you thinking about now?

4. Do you talk to people?
   Who are you talking to now?

5. What do you usually do on Sundays?
   What are you doing now?

Convers-Action Chains

Student A: goes to front of class
Student B: requests student A to do something
Student C: asks another student the question
Student D: answers student C's question

e.g. *"Please walk around the room."*
"What's student A doing?"
"He's walking around the room."

Suggestions for requests:
knock on the door – hum a song – wave 'goodbye' – jump up and down – talk to (...)

Temporary

The use of the Progressive Present tense indicates that the action had a beginning and will have an end. Therefore it indicates that the action is **temporary**.

Examples: It's raining.
The bus is coming.
I'm eating a piece of apple pie.

This idea of **temporary** is stronger when the time period is stretched with expressions such as "these days", "this month", . . . For example, the statement, "Mary's acting friendly these days.", implies that usually she does not act friendly and might soon return to her old ways.

XIII

Fill in the blanks with a word, or phrase, from the box. Then write another sentence that could follow the first as a natural implication.

today	these days	this week	this Spring	this month

Example: He isn't sleeping well these nights. But he usually sleeps well.

1. She's taking over for the Director _____
2. Mary's looking fine _____
3. The farmer's planting potatoes _____
4. I'm staying home _____
5. Joe's not doing much _____

Speaking Specifically

What are you doing?
I'm studying the monkeys.
Why?
Because I'm writing a book on monkeys.
Really? When did you start it?
Last year.
When do you expect to finish it?
In about two more months.
What's its title?
"Monkey Business".
How many chapters are there?
. . .

Note the number of specific details mentioned. Contrast this section with "Generally Speaking" on page 10.

XIV

Pairs of students make up dialogues using the following questions to begin.

Example:

What are you watching?

I'm watching the hockey game.

Who's playing?

The Canadiens against the Leafs.

Who's winning?

The Canadiens.

1. What are you typing?
2. Are they arguing again?
3. Where are you going?
4. Who's making that noise?
5. Why are you hurrying?
6. What are you thinking about?

XV

Underline the phrase that would complete the sentence most naturally.

Example: Jane's wearing *dresses* / *<u>a blue dress</u>*

1. The cat's lying — on the couch / on the couches
2. My sister's taking — a bath / baths
3. The bird's building — nests / its nest
4. Her tulips are growing well — this Spring / in Spring
5. My husband's watching — football games / the football game
6. Are you sitting — on the chair / on chairs
7. I'm swimming — in pools / in the pool
8. He's eating — in the livingroom / in the livingrooms
9. He's driving too fast — often / now
10. He's talking — to his friend / to anyone

SIMPLE vs PROGRESSIVE PRESENT

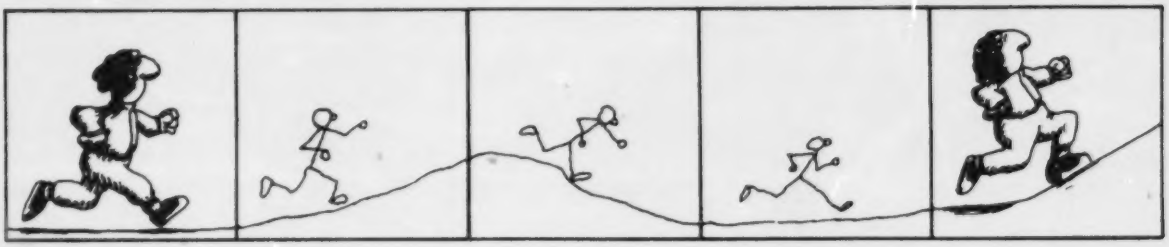
XVI

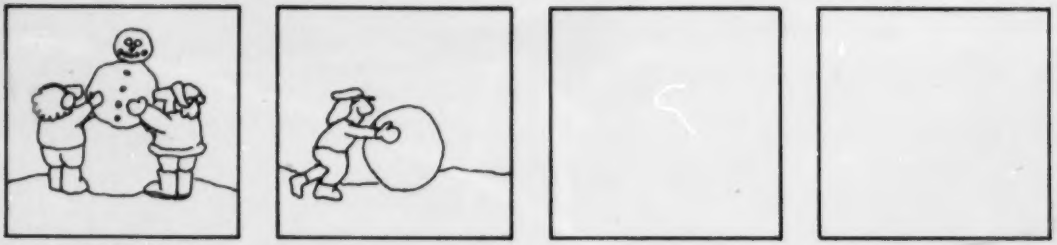
Show what the sentences mean by completing the series of pictures.

Example:

He runs.

He's running.



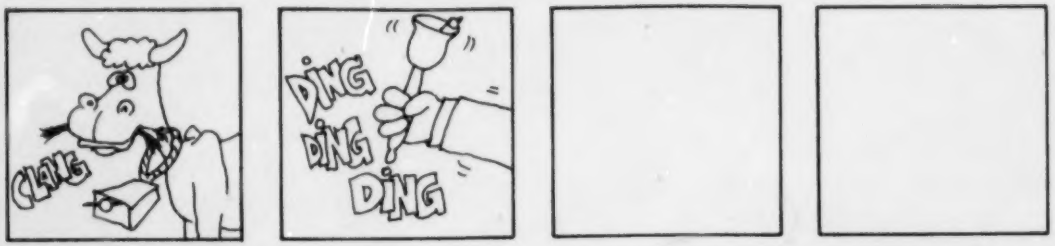


1. Children build snowmen.

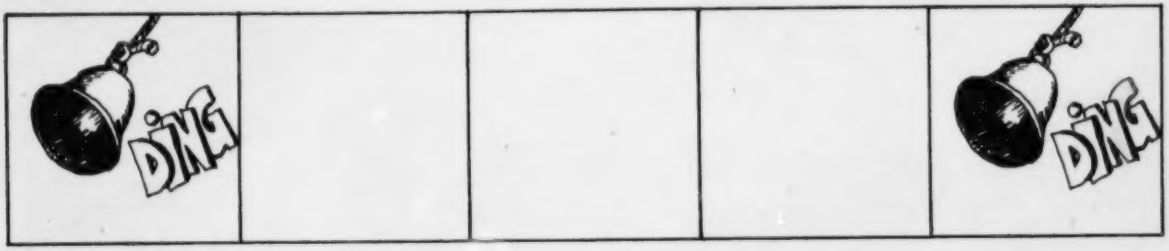
2. The children are building a snowman.

3. Candles burn.

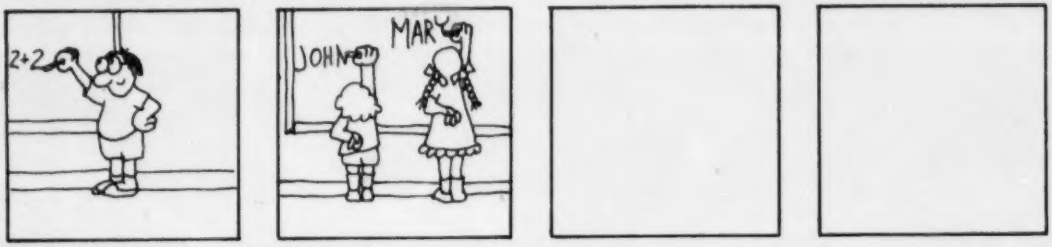
4. The candles are burning.



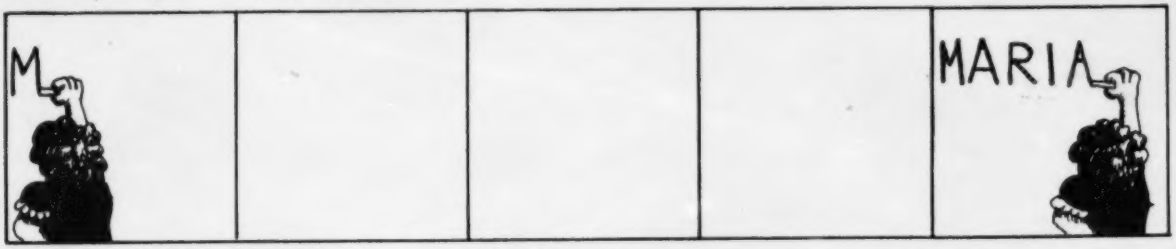
5. Bells ring.



6. The bell is ringing.



7. Students print on blackboards.



8. The student's printing her name on the blackboard.

Now write your own pairs of sentences and illustrate them.

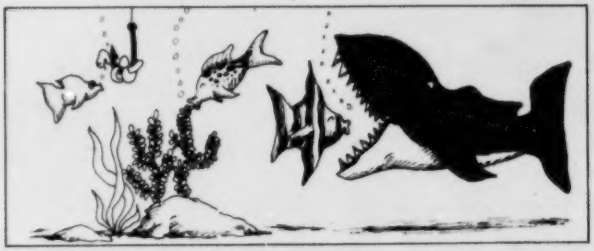
XVII

A) Answer the question. Give as many facts as you can.
B) Look at the picture. Answer the question.

Example:

A) What do fish do? Fish live in water. They swim. They eat weeds, worms, and other fish. Some fish eat people.

B) What are these fish doing?



The little white fish is looking at a worm. The spotted fish is happily eating weeds. The striped fish is foolishly swimming into the large fish's mouth.

1. A) What do bears do? _____

_____

B) What are these bears doing?

_____

_____

_____

_____

2. A) What do policemen do? _____

_____

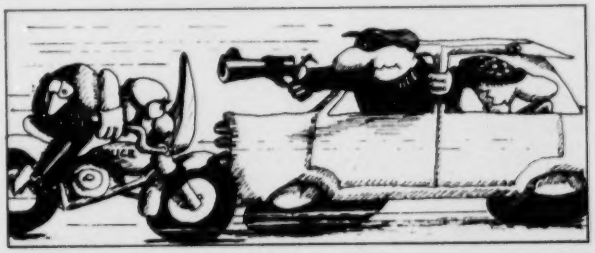
B) What's this policeman doing?

_____

_____

_____

_____



3. A) What do chickens do? _____

_____

B) What's this chicken doing?

_____

_____

_____

_____

4. A) What do secretaries do? _____

_____

B) What are these secretaries doing?

_____

_____

_____

_____

5. A) What do *you* do? B) What are *you* doing?

XVIII

Fill in the correct form of Present tense of the verb in brackets.

1. He's a car salesman. He (sell)_____ cars.
2. We (sell)_____ our old car because we want to buy a new one.
3. Mary usually (drink) _____ tea.
4. Sheila (drink) _____ a cup of coffee with sugar in it.
5. I (get)_____ an awful headache because of all this noise.
6. He's a real hockey fan. He (watch)_____ hockey every time he gets a chance.
7. They (watch)_____ the hockey game because there's nothing else to watch.
8. He always (think) _____ things over before he does anything.
   That way he (not make)_____ too many mistakes.
9. I haven't decided yet but I (think)_____ it over.
10. John and Joan (get) _____ a divorce because they can't get along.
11. He (eat)_____ a delicious, hot pizza that cost $5.00.
12. It (rain)_____ a lot in April but it (not rain)_____ now.
13. John (lose) _____ his hair.
14. Whenever he goes to that restaurant, he (order)_____ onion soup.
15. When I need money, I (go)_____ to work.

XIXa

Underline the sentence most appropriately related to the italicized sentence.

Example: *What does he do?*
<u>He delivers the mail</u>. He's delivering a letter to her.

1. *I'm watching TV.*
   Really? What's on? How often?

2. *Do you like the ice cream I just bought for you?*
   Yes, I enjoy it. Yes, I'm enjoying it.

3. *What does that group sing?*
   Folksongs. "O, Canada"

4. *He runs.*
   Is he out of breath yet? That's good for him.

5. *What does he collect?*
   A stamp. Stamps.

XIXb

This is the same as above, but the italicized sentence follows, rather than precedes, the sentence to be underlined.

6. What does he say? What's he saying? *I don't know. I can't hear him.*

7. What do you do? What are you doing? *I'm a clerk.*

8. Why is he hurrying? Why does he hurry? *Because he's already late for his appointment.*

9. What do they do at the zoo? What are they doing at the zoo? *Sometimes they just sit on the benches.*

10. Who laughs? Who's laughing? *All people.*

XX

Correct these sentences.

1. He runs now.
2. They grow taller.
3. Birds lay some eggs.
4. He eats 2 hamburgers without onions.
5. John stays home today.
6. They try to find a new job with more money.
7. He's wearing flashy ties.
8. Please turn the light off! It shines in my eyes.
9. They make a report on the cost of living.
10. Why do you eat that apple? Can't you see it's rotten?

XXI

Write short dialogues using these questions to start with.

Example:

What do you do?

I'm a postman.

Do you like your job?

Yes.

1. Who's he talking to?
2. What are you doing?
3. Why aren't you wearing a tie?
4. What do you usually bring for lunch?
5. What do you do at parties?

Some Suggested Oral Drills

Subjects	Predicates
my friends	eat breakfast
I	wait
they	look for it
John	park the car
Dave	pay
Miss Jones	laugh
you	show off
he	study the problem
Mr. Smith	play tennis
we	get better
she	shout
Pete and Dave	talk

A. Choose one predicate (or subject). Change the subjects (or predicates).

Example: Predicate chosen 'laugh'

Teacher – *Mr. Smith*
Students – *Mr. Smith's laughing.*
Teacher – *She*
Students – *She's laughing.*
Teacher – *John*
Students – *John's laughing.*
. . .

B. Continue as above but change the statements to i) negative, ii) interrogative.

Cover Cards

On the fold-in portion of the back cover you will find 4 sets of cards. These are learning aids. Their purpose is to 'kinesthesize' different aspects of the concepts we have been working with. For instance, by manipulating, separating, and folding the cards the students can become aware of the *unity* of the Progressive Present on(in?) one hand, and the *disunity* of the Simple Present on the other. Also the *extendability* of the Progressive Present is physically demonstrated through the accordion action of these cards.

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Detach cards from cover.
2. Separate the 4 sets by cutting along the horizontal lines.
3. Find the 2 Progressive Present sets (They're singing a song. The caterpillar's turning into a butterfly.) and fold them accordion style.
4. Find the Simple Present sets and cut out each card. (They sing songs. 4 cards. Caterpillars turn into butterflies. 4 cards.)
5. Now create 4 Simple Present cards of your own; 2 for the *sing* set and 2 for the *turn into* set.